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"LARRY'S BABY"

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PROPERTY

OF

JOHNNIE

SPEER

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"LARRY'S BABY"
(A tabloid in Three Settings and three Numbers)

CAST

LARRY WILKERSON LIGHT COMEDY
TOMMY LIGHT COMEDY
MR. WILKERSON CHARACTER

HELEN INGENUE
MISS WICKS NURSE. COMEDienne
M EFFIE SHANNON L EAD

SETTINGS

SCENE ONE Interior of rexterior of Wilkerson's home.
SCENE TWO Hospital Drop. St. Vincent hospital.
SCENE THREE Room in cheap rooming house in Chicago.

PROPS

Baby. (ALIVE IF POSSIBLE)
Doctor's instruments
Note book
Loaded letter
Baby cradle
Telephone

" LARRY'S BABY "

MR. WILKERSON

(DISCOVERED ON WITH LARRY) Well, my boy, how do you feel as your wedding day draws closer?

LARRY

Oh I don't know. How did you feel before yours drew closer?

MR. WILKERSON

Oh that's been a long time ago. Larry, I guess you know how glad your mother and I are over the fact that you are going to marry Helen. She's a great little girl---and we have always looked forward to the day that you two would get married. You love Helen, don't you, son?

LARRY

Oh yes yes---wouldn't make any difference if I did--or didn't, I'm marrying her, am I not? Hang it all when does this wedding rehearsal start. I'm anxious to get it over with.

MR. WILKERSON

We're waiting for the preacher now son.

LARRY

I don't see why we have to rehearse the wedding any way. I'd just as soon do it the day we're supposed to.

MR. WILKERSON

Oh well I agree with you there, but your mother thinks that we ought to rehearse it so that the best man and the bridesmaids and all will know just where to be and what to do. Weddings are a lot of bother at that--especially weddings of fashion.

LARRY

I'll say they are. I wish it were all over with. I hate weddings.

HELEN

(ENTERS R.) What's this you hate weddings, Larry? Isn't that a nice thing to say considering the fact that I am the one you are having the wedding for? One would think you didn't want to marry me. (PUTS

LARRY

Oh yes I do, Helen--but the wedding part is what I don't like. What's that you have in your hand? A letter? Who's it for? Me?

HELEN

Yes---it's for you--and marked some maternity hospital in Chicago. O

LARRY

What did it say?

HELEN

Silly, I'm not married to you yet--so of course I wouldn't presume to open your mail. But then I know you'll tell me what's in it. Won't you?

MR. WILKERSON

(LAUGHING) Leave it to a woman every time to find out what your mail is, son. (LOOKS OFF R.) Say there comes the minister up the lawn. Tommy Widgetts is with him.

TOMMY

(ENTERS) Hello--say I brought the minister with me---I

I guess everything is already for the wedding rehearsal, isn't it? 2
Hello, Larry, old boy---you look nervous---you can't be any more nervous
over the fact that your the bridegroom than I am over the fact that I'm
the best man. These weddings are not my line at all.

MR. WILKERSON

Cheer up, both of you---after it's all over---you don't mind it. Say,
Helen, you'd better come along with me---we will probably be needed to
help give suggestions. (THEY EXIT) (LARRY HAS OPENED LETTER BY THIS TIME)

TOMMY

What's the matter with you, Larry---You look like something had happened

LARRY

It has---(LOOKS STRAIGHT AHEAD) I'm going to have a baby!

TOMMY

Wait a minute--you and Helen aren't married yet.

LARRY

That's it. That's why I'm worried. This letter I've got in my hand is
from a maternity hospital in Chicago. They want me to come there at once
It says that

I will possibly understand about this request if I remember
the Art Exhibit in Boston.

TOMMY

By that some girl is accusing you of being the father to her child, I
presume. It says recall the art exhibit in Boston, well you were in
Boston a little over a year ago---gee old fellow, this is a jam you are
in, and to think it had to come on your wedding day. Who is the girl,
old fellow.

LARRY

I---

TOMMY

Now don't conceal anything from me. Haven't I always been your best
friend. Remember, I'm a lawyer---now who's the girl from Chicago?

LARRY

I won't tell you. I mean I can tell you I mean I don't know any girls
in Chicago

TOMMY

Do you know any girls in Boston?

LARRY

Yes, but this letter is from Chicago.

TOMMY

A girl from Boston could have a baby in Chicago

LARRY

Of course she could. I'm not denying that. She could have twins for
all that I care. What's a Boston girl having a baby in Chicago got to
do with me?

TOMMY

Nothing unless you happen to know her. You spent three years there, and
in that time you must have had your wild little flings--

LARRY

Well, what if I did?

LARRY

Yes. I was rather frightened and I said we must get married. She laughed. Laughed at me. Said I was provincial. You see that's Effie Shannon for you. Well, what could I do--there was nothing I could do --she wasn't marrying anybody because she loved her art. Well, I got mad, she got mad, hell of a row, and that day I left Boston and came home here.

TOMMY

Ever write to her?

LARRY

Every day for weeks?

TOMMY

Any answer?

LARRY

None. Then I tried to forget her. I did forget her. At least I became engaged to Helen like my folks wanted me to. I--I don't see how I can go on now with this wedding

TOMMY

Don't let it worry you. From what you tell me of this girl--I think she's rather sophisticated and pretty wise--maybe she might want to blackmail you I'm going to get you out of this. You just go on with your little wedding plans here--

LARRY

No--I can do that when Effie may be needing me. I can't leave her alone with that baby---if there is one. I've got to go to Chicago at once.

TOMMY

Well, I'm going with you.

LARRY

What will I say to my folks--and to Helen?

TOMMY

Just say you're called away on business---and oh boy what business it is. Let's go. ~~THEY EXIT~~ (THEY START TO EXIT R.)

MR. WILKERSON

(ENTERS L.) Larry, where are you going. The minister is waiting to rehearse your wedding.

LARRY

I can't be there--~~adndkdldkdld~~ I've got to go to Chicago on business.

MR. WILKERSON

But, son, what will I say to the minister?

LARRY

Tell him to go to hell! (LARRY AND TOMMY EXIT)

***** NUMBER ONE *****

(CLOSE IN IF POSSIBLE DRAPE CLOSE IN. THEN LET HOSPITAL DROP IN ONE BEHIND DRAPE. THEN TAKE AWAY DRAPE AFTER NUMBER)

TOMMY

(ENTERS WITH R? WITH LARRY) Well here we are Larry. This is the St. Vincent Maternity Hospital. What are you banking for?

5

LARRY
Oh hospitals allways did make me sick. I guess its the odor of the ether and disinfectants. I wonder where the doctors or the nurse or somebody is. I want toget this suspense over with.

MISS WICKS
(OFF L.) Very well, Doctor, I'll attend to it at once--(ENTERS.)
How do you do gentlemen, is there anything that I can do for you?
(SHE IS DRESSED IN WHITE NURSES UNIFORM VERY PLEASANT YOUNG WOMAN)

LARRY
Well--er--yes---I w e--that is me--I came in answer to this letter you sent me. (HANDS HER LETTER)

MISS WICKS
Oh yes I see. You're the man who lives in BolingGreen?

LARRY
Yes, just outside of Boling Green--my parents have a country estate there.

TOMMY
Yes, now, my dear madam, if you'll explain this letter which you sent to my friend requesting him to come here--

MISS WICKS
Certainlly. We are very sorry to have to bother, you Mr. Wilkerson, but I'm sure you will understand it was quiet necessary for us to get a St. Vincent record of you

LARRY
Record of me? What for?

MISS WICKS
Don't worry it won't. Take long. Sit down. (SEATS HIM) Have you had a medical examination lately?

LARRY
Yes. but--

MISS WICKS
For insurance. (HE NODS) That's good. How old are you?

LARRY
Twenty five.

MISS WICKS
(WRITING IN BOOK) Both parents living?

LARRY
Yes--but what--

MISS WICKS
Any tuberculosis in your family?

LARRY
No.

MISS WICKS
Epilepsy?

LARRY
No.

Insanity?

LARRY

No--not yet. (STARTS TO GET UP)

MISS WICKS

Sit there. Take off your coat. (STARTS REMOVING IT FOR HIM) This will only take a minute--(GETS OUT A MEDICAL INSTRUMENT SUPPOSE TO BE A KIEDEL TUBE)

LARRY

Say--this--this is a maternity hospital isn't it?

MISS WICKS

Oh yes. Exclusively. Now I'm going to shove something into you.

LARRY

Say what is this?

MISS WICKS

This a new way of giving a blood test. It only takes a minute and this way you only have to do it once. (PUTS TUBE TO HIS BREAST TAPS IT. LOOKS AT IT. WRITES)

LARRY

I'm glad of that. Say, do you always do this?

Oh yes--we always keep a complete record. We keep it on file. We ~~put~~ use them for future reference. Everything is all settled now. We won't keep you any longer Mr. Wilkerson. That's all.

LARRY

You mean that's all you wanted of me and now I can go back to Bowling Green?

MISS WICKS

Yes, by the way you are getting married tomorrow, are you not?

LARRY

Yes, tomorrow. You knew about my marriage?

MISS WICKS

Oh yes, and you may rest assured that we 'll be very discreet. Well, good day, sir. That is all. WE just wanted a medical record--

TOMMY

Come on, Larry--let's get started back--

LARRY

All right. Well, good day--and--you you're quite sure that's all you wanted of me here?

MISS WICKS

Quite--unless perhaps you might want to see the baby. You really ought to see him.

LARRY

Huh? Him?

Ys X 36 F 4 is a cute little trick.

LARRY

X what?

MISS WICKS

(LAUGHING) That's your baby's name on the file.

LARRY

(WEAKLY) Baby?

MISS WICKS

Didn't you understand about this, Mr. Wilkerson? You see the medical examination was for purposes of adoption. You knew there was a baby didn't you?

LARRY

No--I mean--yes. I mean--of course.

MISS WICKS

We're not supposed to bring them down stairs, but if you'll wait, I'll see what I can do. It may be your only chance to see your child before it is adopted.

LARRY

My--my baby adopted?

MISS WICKS

Yes--you see that is the purpose of this Hospital and the St. Vincent adoption society. We see that these --well fatherless babes are adopted out into good homes. You needn't worry about anything. I'll go---get your bab thou so you may look at it-(STARTS)

LARRY

Say wait a minute. Tell me more. Where is the baby's mother? This ---er-

MISS WICKS

You mean the ykkk young lady in the case--Miss Shannon. Oh she is still in one of the wards with her son, you see your baby is three weeks old today. However Miss Shannon is leaving today---

LARRY

Leaving today? Where is she? I want to see her. May I?

MISS WICKS

Well I'll see about that --she left word that she did not want to see you, however, when you came.

LARRY

Oh so she doesn't want to see me, eh? What is she going to do?

MISS WICKS

Well, she told me to tell you to go home and get married as you had planned. She said that she was going away to Europe to study art-- I guess you understand---I'll see about the baby. Excuse me a moment, sir. (EXITS)

LARRY

Did you hear that, Tommy? Effie wants to go to Paris at a time like this. And she's turned the bab over to these people to be adopted out by the Lord knows who. It's--its inhuman.

TOMMY
It's quite obvious that she wants to end the whole business. Well let her. You go on back to Bowling Green and marry Helen and the whole thing will be over with.

LARRY

But the baby.

TOMMY

He'll be adopted.

LARRY

Where? When? How? By whom? Do you think I like the idea that my son my own flesh and blood should be given away to--well just most anybody and I never know where he is. Do you think I could marry Helen Carter and live with her day in and day out--knowing that some where in this world I had a son who belonged to me--and I--oh I've got to find that woman, Effie Shannon. I'm going to see her.

TOMMY

Now, Larry, listen to reason--

LARRY

Nothing doing--I want to see about this thing.

TOMMY

Larry, you're crazy.

LARRY

Yes, and so would you be if you had a baby and somebody wanted to give it away. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ (EXITS L. FOLLOWED BY LARRY WHO LOOKS WORRIED)

***** NUMBER TWO *****

EFFIE

(ENTERS L. WITH SUIT CASE) Never mind, I'll find my way out. It'll be great to be out in the sunshine again--(TURNS AROUND SEE LARRY WHO IS FOLLOWING HER) Oh you startled me, Larry.

LARRY

Thought I'd go didn't you.

EFFIE

No, Larry, dear, I didn't. I only hoped you would.

LARRY

But why?

EFFIE

Because you'd talk you'd argue and besides I didn't want to upset you now before your wedding. I'm dreadfully sorry that you had to even be the least bit bothered. But the authorities of this hospital insisted on sending for you to get the medical record--you know for adoption papers of the--the baby. If I'd of had my way you'd have never known anything about it.

LARRY

Well, I do know all about it--and I want to tell you that I think it is a hell of a thing to do.

EFFIE

What? Have a baby? Well, Larry, dear, you're hardly in a position to criticize me.

LARRY

I'm not talking about having the baby--that's different--that's another matter.

EFFIE

(CASUALLY) It was just an accident.

LARRY

(AMAZED) A what?

EFFIE

An accident--a--a biological accident--that's all. I didn't know. I never dreamed it was going to happen.

LARRY

Well, I don't know why you should be so damned sure of that. Any way it has happened and I want to know what you mean by giving him away? I never heard of such a thing. Giving them the right to give it away to most anybody that would qualify-- It's inhuman I tell you.

EFFIE

Now, Larry, if you raise your voice, I'll leave, but if you'll calm down I'll explain.

LARRY

All right. I'll be calm. I'll listen, I'm all ears. But I'll tell you this. I won't agree with you.

EFFIE

Of course not--having heard of this only ten minutes ago--you naturally know more about it than I do. I'm only the baby's mother

LARRY

And I'm the baby's father.

EFFIE

You are-if I say so.

LARRY

W H A T ?

EFFIE

(LANGUIDLY) Oh, I'm not going to deny that you are his father.

LARRY

Thanks.

EFFIE

Just the same you have nothing to say about it.

LARRY

Is that so? Now look here, Effie--

EFFIE

Now, Larry, please. I've had a dreadful time these last three weeks and all the months before and if you're going to nag--

LARRY

I'm not nagging--I'm simply asking you in the nicest way I know.

EFFIE

Well, it isn't very nice.

Why, Larry, you're not even civil to me. The idea. We meet for 10 the first after ~~skye~~ nearly a year and all you do is bark at me.

LARRY

I didn't bark.

EFFIE

Yes, you did, Larry. You barked. And I'm in no condition to be barked at--you sit there and tell me you're the baby's father.

LARRY

Well, I am

EFFIE

All right, but don't expect me to be impressed. Try being a baby's mother once--and see how you like that. Just why women should have the exclusive rights to motherhood--I don't know!

LARRY

(QUICKLY) Neither do I! Especially when they give their babies away.

EFFIE

Now I'll explain that if you won't go off into one of your tantrums. You seem to forget that I have had many problems to face through all of this. First, there was my family. When they learned of my condition--they disowned me for the disgrace that I had brought to them. Oh I didn't mind that so much, but there I was thrown out of a home--and when the baby did come--I saw only one thing to do--give him up for adoption. He'll be happier in a home--

LARRY

I can't see that. My baby happier among strangers -

EFFIE

Silly, they won't be strangers to the baby/ Don't you see? He'll have a home--a real home -that's more than I could give him.

LARRY

Then why didn't you tell me, Effie?

EFFIE

I didn't know, dear, until after I heard you were engaged to be married. And besides did you think I was the kind of a girl who would show up in your home town among your people--and claim you the father of my child. That would have spoiled your name in the town, your chance for a career as a lawyer. What chance would you have as a lawyer with an illegitimate son.

LARRY

Well, that is a nice thing to say. Illegitimate son.

EFFIE

Well, he is.

LARRY

He's ours, isn't he?

EFFIE

Just the same that's what they'd call him in the town of Bowling Green Of course--I get no credit for avoiding that--and I certainly get no credit for or thanks for protecting you. Yes, shouldering the whole thing myself. I knew very well, Larry if I told you--

You might have to marry me. Ha. You can't fool me, Effie--I know. The trouble with yba the whole trouble with you--in a nut shell. You don't love me. That's why we're here--that's why this has happened.

EFFIE

That baby happend--because I don't love! I certainly don't see that.

LARRY

Oh yes, you do--but never mind let it go--that's all over now. Goon

EFFIE

Anyhow I never said I didn't love you.

LARRY

No. You just wouldn't marry me is that it?

EFFIE

Exactly--you or anybody else.

LARRY

No, you want to paint--pictures--and carve junk---art. Bunk.

EFFIE

Larry, my life is my own--and I'm going to just exactly as I please with it. If I make a mess of it, all right. I belongs to me. If you think I'm going to settle down in Bowling Green and raise a dozen babies--well, I just won't do it. I won't! I won't! If you think I'm just going to do nothing else but be your wife--

LARRY

Have I asked you to?

EFFIE

No--espeically since you're going to marry some one else.

LARRY

Tomorrow--I'm going to be married tomorrow.

EFFIE

That suits me.

LARRY

Fine, then we're both satisfied. Now--gon--on about the baby--

EFFIE

Larry, there's nothing else--he's going to be adopted---The St. Vincent adoption society will take care of him--

LARRY

Oh will they now--well let me tell you something--the St. Vincents, you--the Uninted States Army and all the world is not going to take my baby, my own son, wand refuse to let me know what they do with thim. I won't let them do it.

EFFIE

Well, what will you do?

LARRY

Well, I'll--I'll do something.

EFFIE
Now see here if you do anything to embarrass me, I'll swear that you are not the baby's father--

LARRY
Yes, and if you do that--I'll demand to know who is, and then you try and produce an answer to that.

EFFIE
Well, I've had my say--and now I'm going--I'm satisfied I'm doing what is right. I'm through. I'm going.

LARRY
You're running away--that's all--just running away--

EFFIE
Heavens sakes there's nothing else for me to do.

LARRY
Why not? You can marry me, can't you?

EFFIE
No I can't. You're going to marry some one else. You're in love with some one else.

LARRY
I'm not. You know damned well I'm not. Oh I'm engaged--yes--I'm going to be married. But why? Because my folks wanted me to a--and I done it to forget you. I pretended even to myself that I was in love with Helen--and all the time I knew--and you know, Effie--I've never had a thought for any one but you. Do you think it was easy to forget you, and what we meant to each other--Why for days and days I couldn't eat I couldn't sleep --all night long I'd walk the streets. I did, Effie, no fooling. I finally got myself engaged to her--but I don't love her. I know it's caddish of me to say such a thing--she's worth ten of me--and you.

EFFIE
Thank you. Then why do you prefer me?

LARRY
I don't know--damn it I don't know! But I'm convinced of one thing and that is --you have no right to walk out like this and leave the baby, You owe it something.

EFFIE
I am convinced that I owe nobody nothing except myself. You have your ambitions, and I have mine. and they are certainly not to be just a wife and mother to a guy like you. I've got other things to do and I'm going to do them. Good day! (EXITS R. QUICKLY)

LARRY
(STANDS LOOKING AFTER HER TAKEN BACK) Effie--

MISS WICKS
(ENTERS L. WITH BABY IN BUNDLE) Oh there you are, Mr. Wilkerson--- here's the baby.

LARRY
(LOOKING AT IT PLEASED) That--that's mine?

MISS WICKS
Yes--isn't he a darling? He looks like you, Mr. Wilkerson.

LARRY

(PLEASED) Do you think so?

MISS WICKS

Yes indeed! (TELEPHONE RINGS) Oh there's the telephone ringing. Will --would you ~~make~~ care to hold him while I answer it?

LARRY

(ANXIOUSLY) May I? (DOES NOT KNOW EXACTLY HOW TO HOLD IT)

MISS WICKS

Here take it this way. (SHOWS HIM. HE TAKES IT SHE GOES TO PHONE)
Yes. This is the St. Vincent Maternity Hospital and Adoption Society
You would like to adopt a baby boy? (LOOKS AT LARRY) (HE HOLD BABY
TIGHT) Why yes---we've just been left a wonderful baby boy. Oh so
you work on a farm--and you want a son to grown up and be a farmer
I'm sure this little fellow would be just what you want. (LARRY
LOOKS AROUND WHEN HER BACK IS TURNED. DEFIANTLY HOLDS BABY IN HIS HAND
PUTS ON HIS HAT AND EXITS R. Q. QUICKLY) Yes, call at the hospital to
see about it. (TURNS) Oh where is he gone? He's run off with the
baby. I must report this to the doctor at once. (EXITS)

***** NUMBER THREE *****

(THE SETTING IS THE ROOM OF A ~~CHEAP~~ ROOMING HOUSE IN CHICAGO. LARRY
IS DISCOVERED ROCKING BABY WHICH IS IN A CRADLE OR CAN BE HELD IN
HIS ARMS) (TOMMY KNOCKS ON THE DOOR)

LARRY

Well, who is it?

TOMMY

It's me. Is that you, Larry. (ENTERS D. R.) Well, at last I've found
you. Do you know that ~~make~~ detectives on your trail for over a
week?

LARRY

Detectives?

TOMMY

Yes--- what did you think the hospital people were going to do let
you---steal a baby--and get away with it.

LARRY

But this baby is my own.

TOMMY

That doesn't make any difference to them. Then babies mother made
adoption papers over to the hospital, and the law says the baby is
not yours.

LARRY

I don't give a damn what the law says or any one else says, the baby
is mine and I'm going to keep it.

TOMMY

Don't be a fool, Larry--your folks would probably disown you. Do
you realize there is a lot of explaining going to be necessary on
your part--you've got to account for why your wedding ~~take~~ with
Helen was called off--you've got to make things clear to her and
your mother and father.

LARRY

Have they been searching for me?

No--they don't know that you're being chased down by authorities I've told them that you had some kind of business to attend to. Helen and your father are out in front in the car now. I wanted to come up and see you first. Now I'm going down stairs--and see what I can do to fix things. By the way here is the nurse at the door now. She is coming to take the baby back--you'd better give it to her. How do you, Miss Wicks--(EXITS R.)

MISS WICKS

(ENTERING R?) How do you do. Mr. Wilkerson, I sorry to trouble you but I must ask you for that baby.

TOMMY LARRY

You can't have it?

MISS WICKS

Oh, please give it to me. I'll loose my job if I don't get it. You see it was against the rules of the hospital to even let you have the baby to hold like I let you do that day you stole it.

LARRY

But, Miss Wicks, I do no see why I can't keep the child myself. Let me adopt him---

MISS WICKS

The authorities wouldn't stand for that--because you're a bachelor. All babies that are adopted out of St. Vincent must be given to marrie people.

LARRY

Then if I were married--I could adopt my own son, is that it?

MISS WICKS

Exactly. But the detectives will be here in a minute--hadn't you better let me have it--

LARRY

No--wait---I wonder if Helen would? No, she wouldn't marry when I've already got a baby. Oh, I've got to get married right away that's all there is to it. I--(LOOKS AT HER) Are you single?

MISS WICKS

Of course--but, Mr--

LARRY

Do you want to make one thousand dollars?

MISS WICKS

I-- don't understand?

LARRY

Wouldn't you like to be married to a man and have a home and--

MISS WICKS

Oh, Mr. Wilkerson, you're making me blush!

LARRY

Will you marry me for a thousand dollars?

MISS WICKS

(THROWS HER ARMS AROUND HIM) I'll marry you for nothing! Oh to think that I would be getting married. And, Mr. Wilkerson--you're just the

kind of a man I've always wanted. Oh Mr. Wilkeson--what is 15
your first name. Now that we're to be married I think I should know it

LARRY

Call me Larry. We'll have to hurry and get married--so I can keep my
son from those hounds.

MISS WICKS

Well, aren't you going to kiss me?

LARRY

Is it necessary.

MISS WICKS

No, but it is customary. (THROWS ARMS AROUND HIM. KISSES HIM)

TOMMY

(ENTERS R.) What the--(say Larry I've been fixint things for you.
But what is the meaning of this--fond embrace with the nurse here?

LARRY

Don't you understand--she is going to marry me--so that I can have my
boy. It's the only way out--

TOMMY

Don't be silly---I've told Helen everything and at first she was quite
hurt about your affair with another woman, and a baby, but she finally
reconciled herself and says that she is willing to forgive you, Larry,
and marry you---

LARRY

But the baby--

TOMMY

Oh, I've arranged all of that. There's a splendid family going to
take the bab off your hands, however, I told them, that you would
want to see it often--so they are going to let you see the child as
often as you want to. Now all you have to do is go back to Bowling
Green, marry Helen, and forget everything.

LARRY

Forget--forget the only decent thing that ever happened in my life.
NO I won't. If Helen won't marry me and take the baby, I won't marry
her--

TOMMY

Well, I thought of that--and Helen said she would even be willing to
take the baby herself so long as she was sure you had forgotten your
love for the bab's mother.

MISS WICKS

Oh---Larry --aren't we going to get married?

LARRY

Well, stick around awhile--I might need you--you never can tell.

MISS WICKS

Well, I certainly hope this isn't another false alarm. (EXITS R.)

EFFIE

(OFF R.) Nevermind I'll find him---(ENTERS) So this is your little hide
out is it, Larry---Well, I heard about you running away with the baby.

LARRY
What are you doing here? I thought you were in Paris?

EFFIE
Well, I'm not. I changed my mind. I've decided I want my baby myself. I'm going to keep him.

LARRY
Oh changed your mind about your career huh--you want the baby? Well, what about me?

EFFIE
Oh, I haven't changed my mind about you.

LARRY
I didn't ask you that--what about me? I want the baby.

EFFIE
You're going to be married.

LARRY
To-morrow. Hear that, Tommy? I'll get married to Helen tomorrow.

EFFIE
Funny--I always seem to meet you the day before your wedding. Well, you can't be married and have the baby too. It's a cinch your wife wouldn't want another woman's baby.

LARRY
Won't she? She's not like you.

EFFIE
(JEALOUS) No, she 's worth ten of--I'm sure she's very sweet. (CHANGE

LARRY
She is--I'm crazy about her.

EFFIE
All right, then marry her and--

LARRY
And what?

EFFIE
Have babies of your own; that's what

LARRY
You needn't tell me what to do.

EFFIE
I'm not.

LARRY
(HOLDING BABY TIGHTER) Any how--they won't be like him.

EFFIE
I didn't say they would.

LARRY
No other baby'll ever be like him. And that's why I won't give him up.

EFFIE
Won't you? Well we'll see about that.

TOMMY
(ENTERS WITH HELEN AND MR. WILKERSON) Come along, Helen--here's Larry.
Talk to him.

HELEN
(GOES TO LARRY) Oh, Larry, you poor boy---I've missed you so. Now
Larry, I'm not the least bit angered at you---and I'm trying hard to
understand it all.

MR. WILKERSON
Of course, son, these things will happen? Who is this young lady?
(LOOKS AT EFFIE)

EFFIE
Oh don't mind me. I'll be going in a minute. I'm just the baby's
mother.

HELEN
Oh, you poor girl, I'm very sorry for you---I guess we women must
suffer alike in these affairs. I see no reason to be disgusted with
you. Where are you going?

EFFIE
Oh, I guess I'll go to Paris--and take my baby with me.

MR. WILKERSON
Well, now I believe that is the thing to do. Take the baby away--to
Paris--

LARRY
Not if I know she doesn't. Take my baby away off across the water.
All of you are so kind to--to take the baby off my hands. Can't any of
you understand that I don't want to give it up? Won't some of you
please realize that I'm the father of this baby?

HELEN
Why, Larry, I never thought you were going to take that stand. I--
I think perhaps you and ~~EFFIE~~ this girl might want to talk alone--

LARRY
I don't want to talk to her--she makes me so damn mad I can't think
straight. You get out of here. (TO EFFIE)

EFFIE
Well, I'll go BUT I'm gonna see that I get that baby--- (STARTS)

MISS WICKS
(ENTERS R.) Oh, Larry, dear when are we going to get married---

LARRY
(SUDDENLY CONFUSED) Not now--get out. (PUSHES HER OUT)

HELEN
Say what in the world is the meaning of this. Larry, are you engaged to
somebody else.

EFFIE
I must say this is somewhat of a shock to me.

TOMMY

Come along, Helen---maybe Larry has somethings to say to Effie. We'll wait outside. You'd better come too, Mr. Wilkerson.

MR. WILKERSON

Yes, I guess so---(LOOKS AT LARRY) Larry, it looks to me like you're taking on more than you can handle. It's too much for me to understand (EXITS)

EFFIE

Larry, are you engaged to the nurse of that hospital too?

LARRY

Yes, I am.

EFFIE

But why?

LARRY

To keep the baby.

EFFIE

Two--you need two wives?

LARRY

Oh, I don't know. I got excited. The nurse told me I couldn't adopt him unless I was married. I didn't know then that Helen would marry when she learned of the baby, and I---oh I was crazy but I want that baby, damn it I won't him---no matter who I have to marry.

EFFIE

Well if it's just so you can have some claim on him, Larry, I--I'll marry you. You know just a formal --business like marriage.

LARRY

YOU'll marry me--not because of me?

EFFIE

Oh no--quite impersonally.

LARRY

Well, then I wouldn't marry you if you were the last woman on earth.

EFFIE

But why--

LARRY

I don't love you--that's why?

EFFIE

Do you love both of those women you are engaged to?

LARRY

Yes.

EFFIE

Both of them?

LARRY

Yes--that's different. I don't hate them. I could have peace with them--all I'd ever have with you is misery.

But if you don't love me--

LARRY

Love you? Huh! I wonder now that I ever did.

EFFIE

But you did, Larry. You did love me once. I remember--the first time you told me. We were leaning against a picket fence--- (LAUGHS)
Remember that picket fence, Larry--

LARRY

I wish I'd never seen it.

EFFIE

(TRYING TO LAUGH) It's--It's funny, isn't it?

LARRY

Oh you think it's funny, do you? All right, go on! laugh. After awhile I'll laugh too.

EFFIE

(TURNS AWAY) I'm not laughing, Larry,

LARRY

You know what's the matter with you, Effie--you're too damn fresh. You're not attractive you know.

EFFIE

You used to think I was attractive.

LARRY

Pretended. I didn't want to hurt your feelings, but I could see petty little traits in you. Why I ever got into this mess with you---I didn't love you--I couldn't love you---I couldn't love you any more than you do me? Now what do you think of that?

EFFIE

(TEARS COMING INTO HER EYES) I think you're a liar.

Larry

What?

EFFIE

I--I mean I hope that you are. You said you've been pretending---well I believe you have--we both have--but we've been pretending just the other way---at least I have---Oh I'm going to go away now---I'm going to leave--but before I go I'll tell you something--

LARRY

What?

EFFIE

(SOBS IT OUT) I love you! (COVERS FACE AND RUNS TO D. R.) Oh let me get out of here.

MR. WILKERSON

(ENTERS R. WITH TOMMY) Wait, don't go---my dear young lady, I've been listening at that door. I understand it all now. So does Helen-- Larry, it's quite evident that the best thing you two can do is get married.

LARRY

What--you---mean--you--

MR. WILKERSON

I understand, son. I'm going to go now---(STARTS) We'll be seeing you later on I guess---say I just want to get one peek at my grandson tho'--(LOOKS AT HIM) the little rascal. Well, blessings, children--here's hoping you have many happy years. (EXITS R.)

LARRY

Well, what do you think of that?

EFFIE

I don't know. What do you think?

LARRY

I think we'd better get married?

EFFIE

Oh Larry, and you really didn't mean what you said to me?

LARRY

You know I didn't! We'll get married at once, and then we can have our baby for our own---

EFFIE

Yes--and such a cute little baby---(LOOKING AT HIM) And, honey, he looks just like you. His little face is just the image of yours.

LARRY

(POINTING) Hey wait a minute --that's not the baby's face--this is! (POINTS TO OTHER END)

EFFIE

(LAUGHING) Oh Larry! (THEY EMBRACE)

LARRY

Effie--my Effie!

MISS WICKS

(MISS WICKS ENTERS)

LARRY

(LARRY AND EFFIE ENTER)

MISS WICKS

(MISS WICKS ENTERS)

F I N A L E